



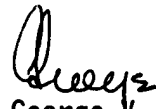
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D.C.
(703) 482-7676

George V. Lauder
Director, Public Affairs

15 May 1986

DCI:

Herewith for your information is the latest correspondence between myself and Strobe Talbott, Washington Bureau Chief of TIME Magazine.


George V. Lauder

TIME
INCORPORATED

1050 CONNECTICUT AVE., N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036-5334
(202) 861-4079

STROBE TALBOTT
BUREAU CHIEF

May 14, 1986

Dear George:

Thanks for your cordial note. I think we're putting this episode behind us, which is all to the good. Henry Grunwald is traveling in Europe and won't be back until May 28. (I understand the Director tried to call him yesterday.) As soon as Grunwald returns, he'll see a copy of your letter to me, along with my suggestion that we resurrect past efforts to get the Director up to New York for what I'm sure will be a constructive discussion of a variety of important issues.

Regards,





CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Phone: (703) 351-7676

13 May 1986

Mr. Strobe Talbott
TIME Magazine
1050 Connecticut Avenue
Suite 850
Washington, D.C. 20036-5334

Strobe,

Thank you for your thoughtful letter of 9 May. I greatly appreciate the tone in which it is written and understand the concerns expressed in it.

I want you to know that the CIA did not "float" any kind of accusation against TIME Magazine. During a confidential discussion--one of several--with Ben Bradlee on a subject of critical national security importance, the Director mentioned en passant the concerns that the intelligence community has regarding the damage done to national security by stories in certain publications. The Director's focus, however, was on THE WASHINGTON POST and the story that it was about to run which could critically damage certain vital intelligence collection capabilities. He did not intend to have his remarks become public. Bradlee, of course, published the Director's confidential talk in order to whip up support among the media for the POST when it makes public the information it holds. An old gimmick. It was Bradlee, not the Agency, who "floated" the story in Lardner's article.

I am strongly in favor of a dialogue with you and other intelligent and objective leaders in the media about our problems, and welcome the prospect that, as you suggested, the Director and I might at some point come to New York and talk to senior TIME officials about these matters. As I mentioned to you, my previous efforts to arrange such a meeting met with, shall we say, a less than enthusiastic response.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "G. Lauder".

George V. Lauder

TIME

INCORPORATED

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STROBE TALBOTT
BUREAU CHIEF

May 9, 1986

George V. Lauder
Director, Public Affairs
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, DC 20505

Dear George:

I've received your letter and passed a copy, along with the enclosed material, to Henry Grunwald.

I think it's important to clarify a couple of points, one having to do with our concern at Time Inc. about the Agency's position and the other having to do with the Agency's concern -- as expressed by the Director and yourself -- about the problem of national-security leaks.

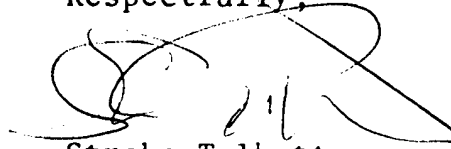
On the first issue: the Director was quoted in the Post as alleging that Time Magazine had violated the law and could be subject to criminal prosecution as a result of an article or various articles we have published. In my telephone conversation with you, you confirmed that that was the Director's belief, although you also said that it was uncertain whether criminal charges would be brought against us. Naturally, we take this extremely seriously. We also believe it to be unfair and inappropriate for the CIA to float this kind of accusation against Time without specifying the basis for it -- i.e., without telling us what we did that you believe to have been a violation of the law. Mr. Grunwald asked the Director, and I asked you, to tell us what you considered to be the offending material published by Time. When I made clear that I was reiterating this request formally and officially, and that I hoped you would go back to the Director on the matter, you said you would, but that the Agency's position was, and I'm quoting you here: "We don't discuss cases that are in prospective litigation." Hence Mr. Grunwald's statement to the press, which did not reflect any claim to "omniscience" on his part; rather it reflected our conviction that Time has violated no law and that, if a responsible government official asserts otherwise, we have a right to know the basis of the charge.

On the second issue, concerning the problem of national-security leaks in general: while there is room, I'm sure, for honest disagreement in specific cases, Mr. Grunwald and other editors of our company believe

that the Director and you have raised a legitimate issue about the conflict between the public's right to know and the press's right to publish, on the one hand, and the government's need and right to keep secrets on the other. Both in the way that it has aired this issue in its pages and in the way it has handled sensitive stories, Time Magazine has shown itself to be responsible in this regard. Indeed, it is largely because we take pride in that responsibility that we were so upset over the Agency's vague, unsubstantiated and, we believe, groundless charges against us.

Let me say finally that I would have regretted this exchange whenever it might have occurred, since I have a high regard for your enterprise and have valued my good relations with you personally and with your colleagues over the years. I particularly regret this episode coming right now, so soon after I have had other occasion to be in touch with you. I look forward to a restoration of the friendlier tone of the recent past.

Respectfully,



Strobe Talbott